

MERCY HIGH SCHOOL

RETURN TO LEARNING
REVISED MARCH 2021



MERCY HIGH SCHOOL
Founded in 1945 by the Sisters of Mercy

29300

COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS PLAN & FOUR DAY IN-PERSON SCHOOL SCHEDULE

DR. CHERYL DELANEY KREGER '66, PRESIDENT
PATRICIA SATTLER, PRINCIPAL
MERCY RETURN TO SCHOOL RESPONSE TEAM



MESSAGE FROM ADMINISTRATION

February 2021

Dear Mercy Parent/Guardian,

We are excited to announce that we will soon welcome back all students to four days of in-person instruction! Although changes will soon be made to the structure of our Wednesday schedule, this day will remain remote. This change will further support the academic, emotional, spiritual and social growth of our students.

We are confident that it is safe to have more in-person instruction now that the number of COVID-19 cases has drastically declined, vaccines have become available for our faculty and staff, and community spread has decreased. Our health and safety protocols will remain firmly in place and will be required of all students.

- All students will return to four day in-person instruction in March 2021.
- The GOAL (remote only) option for the remainder of the semester is still offered only for those students with compromised health who need special consideration. If you have questions concerning eligibility for the GOAL program, please contact Dean of Student Affairs, Mrs. Eleasha Tarplin at edtarplin@mhsmi.org or 248-893-3568.
- **The hybrid model will be discontinued.**
- We will first welcome Seniors on **Monday, March 1** with all other students temporarily remaining on the hybrid or GOAL model.
- We will welcome 9th, 10th and 11th graders to four day in-person instruction on **Monday, March 15**.
- The daily schedule will be revised to accommodate two lunches, announcements and Advisor Group.
- To maintain social distancing at six feet, different classroom solutions will be needed. Some classrooms will have ample space, others will be moved to a larger area to accommodate more students.
- In a small number of situations, it will be necessary to split between two classrooms with an assigned teacher assistant to aid teacher-led synchronous learning, made possible by our robust technology resources. In these cases, students will alternate room location between the teacher and assistant.
- Wednesday will remain remote so that teachers can best support individual student needs and to allow for planned small group campus activities. It is also an opportunity for deep cleaning. Students will not attend class in-person and there will be no instruction.
- [FAQ found here.](#)

We are looking forward to our students returning to a schedule with more in school learning time with their peers. We once again need your help to do this. To assure everyone's health, it is imperative that families continue to practice recommended health protocols including avoiding large gatherings, wearing masks, washing hands and social distancing. We also respectfully ask that you not allow groups of students to meet at your home and that your daughter not be allowed to meet with groups at other homes or indoor locations to help mitigate spread of COVID-19.

We are delighted for our students return and thank you for your continued prayers and support!

Mercy Administrative Team,

*Dr. Cheryl Delaney Kreger '66, President
Colleen McMaster '81, Associate Principal
Nancy Malinowski, Athletic Director*

*Patricia Sattler, Principal
Eleasha Mercer Tarplin '94, Dean of Student Affairs*

MERCY FOUR DAY IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION PLAN

CHANGES TO SUPPORT FOUR DAY IN-PERSON LEARNING

Updated Daily Schedule & 10 Minute Extended School Day Effective March 8

- School day will be extended by 10 minutes as a result of adding additional time to the end of second lunch and accommodating daily announcements.
- The schedule is altered to accommodate two lunch periods, ensuring all students can make it through the cafeteria line and be given equal time to finish their lunch.
 - **Lunch 1 (10:45-11:10am) Followed by 4th Hour: *Classes in East Wing, North Hall, NFL/SFL, Lobby, and Gym***
 - **Lunch 2 (11:30am-12:00pm) 4th Hour Followed by Lunch: *Classes in Chapel, South Hall, Performing Arts***
 - Implement altered lunch schedule the week of March 8 so students may practice in a more controlled manner before the return of all students
- Announcements will be made during the end of second lunch, after completion of Lunch 1's 4th hour instruction. All students will remain in their classroom until the bell rings at the conclusion of announcement time.
- The cafeteria cannot accommodate all students in one lunch period, so two lunch periods are necessary.
- Students must have adequate time to eat lunch prior to moving to the next class. We do not want students short on lunch time and trying to bring food into 5th hour.
- Daily announcements are a necessity and we cannot interrupt instructional time to make these announcements.
- Although the school day would be extended 10 minutes, with a Wednesday Wellness Day, there is a balance of in school hours for both staff and students.



MERCY FOUR DAY IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION PLAN

CHANGES TO SUPPORT FOUR DAY IN-PERSON LEARNING

Wellness Wednesday Effective March 17

Wednesdays will be a devoted day for students to regroup, refresh and catch up, similar to our fall E-Learning Monday schedule. There will be no instruction. Instead the day is similar to unscheduled hours and is devoted to:

- Student homework and study day.
- Teacher planning.
- Teacher office hours - Required two hour blocks of time posted on Schoology.
- Teachers may schedule meetings as needed for individual student academic support.
- [AP classes](#) may opt to meet using the schedule similar to that of former E-Learning Mondays.
- Common time for professional learning, department, and staff meetings as needed.

Wellness Wednesday Rationale

- Students are overwhelmingly requesting off hours. This is not a possibility due to social distancing concerns and the lack of available common areas with our full in-person return scheduling needs. Teachers wish to maximize the in-person instructional time they have with their students rather than building off hours into a “stay in the classroom” model. Offering Wednesdays as an “off hour day” fulfills an important instructional compromise.
- Students are reluctant to return to all day online instruction.
- With all that teachers have to do during passing times with disinfectant needs, there is limited time for teachers to offer individual student support given no off hours.
- Students are voicing concern about 4 straight days with limited opportunity to connect with teachers, collaborate with peers on projects, or “catch their breath”.
- We receive mixed reviews from both teachers and students on the effectiveness of the online Flex Days.
- Having an open campus on Wednesday allows us to expand programming opportunities that will not impact planned instructional time.
- Teachers currently do not have ample time to focus on curricular improvement needs with classes offered during Flex Days. With the pandemic, we have not been able to properly prioritize department growth.

MERCY FOUR DAY IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION PLAN

CHANGES TO SUPPORT FOUR DAY IN-PERSON LEARNING

Weekly Advisor Group Effective March 19

Schedule Weekly Advisor Group Meetings every Friday for the social and emotional connection of our staff and students.

- One day a week will have an altered schedule to accommodate meeting of Advisor Groups. The revised schedule does not impact instructional time.
- Students and staff are both asking for personal connections with their Advisor Groups.
- It is important to consider the overall well-being and emotional support of our students, which can maximize learning.
- Advisor Groups are a key component to building and maintaining safe spaces and enhancing trustful relationships.
- Advisor Groups let students connect with peers outside of their classes which is important seeing that we cannot offer traditional unscheduled off hours.
- In-person meetings for Advisor Groups promote student participation and attendance over that of virtual meetings.
- The Cafe Team will offer only easy Grab-n-Go options on this day to give us more flexibility with lunch scheduling. On Fridays, students will eat lunch in their Advisor Group.



MERCY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

DAILY SCHEDULE MON, TUES, & THURS Begins March 8, 2021

This schedule allows for 45 minute instruction time, 10 minute passing and disinfecting time between classes, 30 minute lunch, 5 minute announcements.

Lunch 1		Lunch 2	
1st Hour	8:00 am - 8:45 am	1st Hour	8:00 am - 8:45 am
2nd Hour	8:55 am - 9:40 am	2nd Hour	8:55 am - 9:40 am
3rd Hour	9:50 am - 10:35 am	3rd Hour	9:50 am - 10:35 am
Lunch	10:45 am - 11:10 am	4th Hour	10:45 am - 11:30 am
4th Hour • Announcements	11:10 am - 11:55 am • 11:55 am - 12:00 pm	Lunch • Announcements	11:30 am - 12:00 pm • 11:55 am - 12:00 pm
5th Hour	12:10 pm - 12:55 pm	5th Hour	12:10 pm - 12:55 pm
6th Hour	1:05 pm - 1:50 pm	6th Hour	1:05 pm - 1:50 pm
7th Hour	2:00 pm - 2:45 pm	7th Hour	2:00 pm - 2:45 pm

WELLNESS WEDNESDAY Begins March 17, 2021

Wednesdays will be a devoted day for students to refresh, study, attend teacher office hours. There will be no instruction, the day is similar to unscheduled hours.

[AP classes may opt to meet using schedule here.](#)

DAILY SCHEDULE FRIDAY ADVISOR GROUP Begins March 19, 2021

This schedule allows for 45 minute instruction time, 10 minute passing and disinfecting time between classes, lunch, Advisor Group.

1st Hour	8:00 am - 8:45 am
2nd Hour	8:55 am - 9:40 am
3rd Hour	9:50 am - 10:35 am
Announcements/Lunch/Adviser Group Meetings	10:45 am - 11:05 am
4th Hour	11:15 am - 12:00 pm
5th Hour	12:10 pm - 12:55 pm
6th Hour	1:05 pm - 1:50 pm
7th Hour	2:00 pm - 2:45 pm

MERCY GOAL PROGRAM

GROWING THROUGH ONLINE ACADEMIC LEARNING

Remote Only Learning Option

We value the personal contact that enriches overall student learning, and are committed to providing as many traditional experiences as is safely and reasonably possible for all students.

Returning to in-person instruction is concerning to our students who have underlying health conditions that put her or family members in increased risk due to the possibility of COVID-19 exposure. For this reason, we continue to offer the Mercy GOAL (Growing through Online Academic Learning) program for eligible students.



Mercy students who have health or safety concerns may opt to participate in classes 100% remotely through the GOAL program. Registered students commit to the GOAL program throughout the rest of the semester.

Students selecting this option will actively participate in live instruction as scheduled throughout the school day using enhanced remote streaming technology and attendance will be recorded. Teachers may opt for GOAL students to work independently and off-line on modified lessons when necessary.

Students selecting the online option agree to:

- be on time for classes and **actively participate** in each class lesson and activity.
- complete all class activities, assignments and tests within the assigned due date.
- follow Student Code of Conduct policies as outlined in the [Mercy Family Handbook and Code of Conduct](#) for attendance and acceptable course participation protocol.
- remotely attend adviser group, class meetings, club meetings, counseling sessions, open teacher office hours as requested, and any other required extracurricular student meetings/activities.
- meet as requested outside of regular scheduled hours with teachers, student project groups and counselors in order to keep learning on track.
- independently complete alternative assignments or assessments as needed to best demonstrate learning given the possibility of access limitations to classroom materials and resources.

Students participating in the GOAL program are eligible for all athletics and extracurricular activities.

Any student who becomes ill throughout the school year, is asked to quarantine, or is unable to return to the classroom for other reasons will temporarily transition to the GOAL program until she is safely able to return to in-person instruction.

PREVENTATIVE SAFETY MEASURES

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness, and spreads when people are in relatively close proximity, through respiratory droplets generated. There currently is no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 and the best way to avoid being exposed is through practicing social distancing, wearing a face mask, handwashing and disinfecting commonly touched items.



To promote a safe return to school for staff and students, Mercy HS is implementing the following health and safety strategies that are discussed in this plan:

- Required professional development for all instructional and student support staff to complete a trauma-informed and resilient schools course.
- Hiring of a school nurse to assist in education, monitoring and prevention strategies.
- Implementation of 6' social distancing practices throughout the school day.
- Instillation of hand sanitation stations throughout the school.
- Inventory of hand sanitizer and disinfectant materials in all classrooms.
- Increased installation of touchless faucets and soap dispensers in bathrooms.
- Marked one-way traffic patterns throughout the school.
- Personal protection barriers installed at the Reception Area and Attendance Office.
- Signage throughout the school promoting proper hygiene and social distancing.
- Required use of a face mask for all students, staff and visitors.
- Daily COVID-19 symptom reporting screening for all staff prior to building entry.
- Parent daily COVID-19 symptom screening of all students prior to building entry.
- Restriction of visitors with strict symptom screening and record keeping prior to being allowed entry to the building.
- Restriction of eating throughout the school outside of scheduled classroom lunch period.
- Limitation of commonly shared classroom materials.

PREVENTATIVE SAFETY MEASURES CONTINUED...

- Classroom disinfection policy between classes of personal space and shared objects.
- Assigned student class seating whenever possible to limit physical interactions.
- Hiatus on full school in-person assemblies, dances and other large group gatherings. We are exploring options for safely celebrating Mass.
- Modifications to drinking fountains to remove spout functionality.
- Suspension of unscheduled hours to limit student physical interactions throughout the school.
- Students with permanent off-hours will be assigned a room location.
- Offering of Cafeteria food choices to Grab-and-Go options, with increased point of sale stations.
- Increased disinfecting of commonly touched surfaces and bathrooms throughout the day, including routine use of electrostatic sprayers to help prevent the spread of pathogens.
- Hosting on-site fall flu clinic to help prevent further spread of disease within our community.
- Coordinating and monitoring of student school entry and exit points to reduce arrival and dismissal traffic.
- Isolation and reporting protocol for staff and students exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.
- Designation of a COVID-19 response team.
- Staff and student training on the proper use of PPE (personal protection equipment), safe hygiene practices and identifying COVID-19 symptoms.
- Routine communication protocols with the Oakland County Health Department to monitor local COVID-19 infection trends.
- Process for reporting, managing and communicating a COVID-19 positive case within the school community, including when the school or area of the school would need to shut down.
- Implementation of a digital student check-in/check-out attendance practice.
- Increased ventilation as possible in each classroom, including the opening of windows as weather permits and newly installed windows along the south hallway for better air flow and temperature control.
- Communication to all staff on COVID-19 vaccination opportunities.

HYGIENE PROTOCOL

COVID-19 spreads when people are in relatively close proximity, through respiratory droplets generated by coughing, sneezing, or talking to an infected person. Among the most effective preventive measures – when used consistently and in combination – are masks, physical distancing, handwashing, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.

The health and safety of Mercy students and staff are our top priority when making the decision to reopen school for in-person learning in the fall. The following health and safety requirements have been developed in collaboration with health professionals, local health agencies, and CDC guidelines.



Keeping the Mercy HS community safe from the spread of COVID-19 requires that all staff and students diligently follow the CDC general control and preventive guidance:

- Wash hands often with anti-bacterial soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating and after blowing nose, coughing or sneezing. When anti-bacterial soap and running water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Follow appropriate respiratory etiquette, which includes covering for coughs and sneezes with elbow or a tissue, then throwing the tissue in the trash immediately.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid physical contact with others, such as hugging and shaking hands.
- Frequently clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces with CDC approved cleaning spray or wipes.

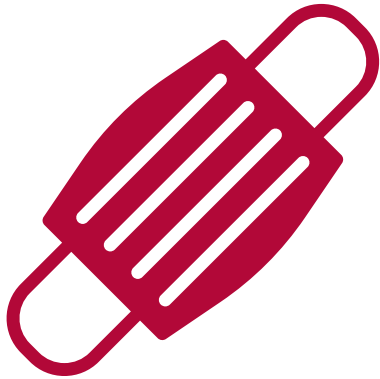
In addition, students and staff must familiarize themselves with the symptoms of COVID-19, which include:

- Cough
- Fever
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Early symptoms such as chills, body aches, sore throat, headache, diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, runny nose, loss of smell or taste, etc.

If a staff or student develops these symptoms, she/he **MUST NOT COME TO SCHOOL.**

MASKS

As the primary route of transmission for COVID-19 is respiratory, masks are among the most critical components of risk reduction. During Phase 4, our requirements for the wearing of face masks is as follows:



- All students, faculty, staff and visitors must wear face masks that cover both the mouth and nose, except when eating meals.
 - Masks must always be worn throughout the entire Campus, including when walking outside to and from the parking lot.
 - Families experiencing financial hardship and unable to afford masks should contact Mercy President, Dr. Cheryl Kreger, cdkreger@mhsmi.org.
 - Looser fitting face coverings such as a scarf, bandana or other accessories are not allowed.
 - Any student or staff member not able to medically tolerate the wearing of a mask throughout the day due to a pre-existing medical condition, must provide medical documentation.
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- Face shields may be an *additional* option for those students or staff with medical concerns or in higher exposure risk categories, however face shields must supplement the wearing of a face mask, unless a mask can not be tolerated due to a pre-existing medical condition.
 - All students and staff will receive information about properly removing and putting on masks.
 - Non-disposable face masks must be washed daily. Daily face masks should be appropriately discarded at the end of the day.
 - Masks are required to be worn by everyone on the bus during transportation.
 - Masks may be removed only for eating during the designated lunch period assuming 6' social distancing is in place.

GLOVES

Students should not wear gloves throughout the day during school due to cross contamination concerns. Frequent hand-washing or sanitation is encouraged and sanitation stations are conveniently located throughout the building.

Students are encouraged to bring a personal supply of alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing is another important practice that helps mitigate transmission of the virus. It is important to note that while 6' distancing is emphasized in CDC guidelines (especially when no mask/face covering is worn), there is no precise threshold for safety. At this time while our geographical area remains in a Phase 4 health risk, our requirements for social distancing are as follows:

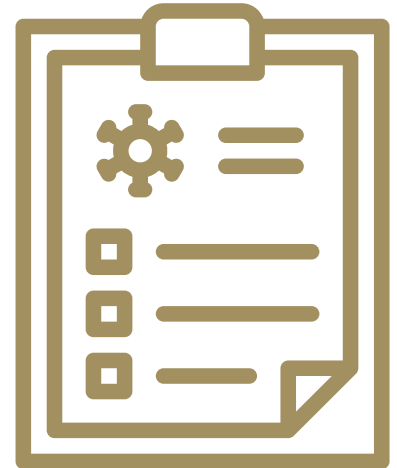
- 6' of distance between individuals will be implemented whenever feasible, and as possible, markers will be placed throughout the school.
- To the extent possible, classroom desks will be spaced six feet apart and facing the same direction. Students will be assigned consistent classroom seating.
- Use of alternative spaces in the school (Cafeteria, Media Center, Chapel, Lobby, Gym and Auditorium) will be repurposed if needed to increase the amount of available space to accommodate the maximum distancing possible.
- A signed traffic pattern will be established to enact one-way passing throughout the school.
- Measures will be established to enforce social distancing in school common areas (Cafeteria, Media Center, Chapel, Lobby, Gym, Auditorium and Courtyards).
- Students arriving early to school will be asked to go directly to their 1st hour classroom.
- Additional safety precautions are required for the school Attendance Officer, or any staff supporting students in close proximity, when distance is not possible. These precautions must include eye protection (e.g., face shield or goggles), protective barriers, and a mask. Precautions may also include gloves and disposable gowns, especially if the individual may come into close contact with bodily fluids.



SCREENING PROTOCOL

It is critical that parents check for student symptoms each morning as this will serve as the primary screening mechanism for COVID-19 symptoms. At this time, our requirements for screening upon building entry are as follows:

- Families should not send their children to school if they are ill and/or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms. We will provide a checklist of symptoms and other guides to help families and students with this process.
- Daily in-school student temperature checks screening of students will not be conducted due to the high likelihood of potential false positive and false negative results. Any student who presents throughout the day with COVID-19 related symptoms will be immediately referred to the school healthcare point of contact and sent home.
- All staff will complete a daily digital COVID-19 symptom self-assessment tracker each morning prior to entering the building. Staff should not enter the school if they are ill and/or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms.
- Visitor entry to the building will be discouraged and restricted. Granted visitor access will only be as necessary, and will be scheduled for after school hours whenever possible.
- All visitors will complete a COVID-19 symptom assessment that will be digitally maintained. All visitors will comply with face covering and hygienic regulations, as well as allow for a temperature check.
- Any visitor who is non-compliant to entry protocol or who is ill and/or exhibits COVID-19 symptoms or answers positively to high risk questions will be denied entry to the building.



STUDENT COVID-19 RELATED SYMPTOMS/DIAGNOSIS

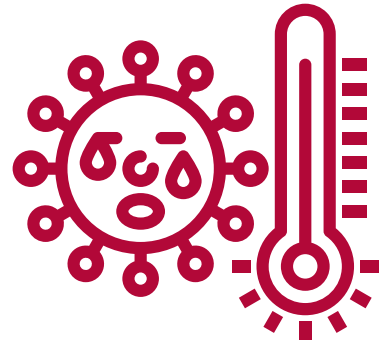
In order to minimize transmission of COVID-19, Mercy has identified an isolated space available for students displaying COVID-19 symptoms.

At this time, our protocol for COVID-19 related symptoms and diagnosis are as follows:

- All parents are asked to assess that their student is not symptomatic and/or has not been in close contact with a person with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis before coming to school. Students not meeting this criteria should **STAY HOME**.
- A student who shows COVID-19 symptoms during the school day will be moved to the specific room pre-designated for COVID-19 isolation until she can be picked up by a family member. Symptomatic students will not be allowed to use group transportation. More information about steps to safely discharge students will be provided in future guidance.
- Mercy Administration will follow-up with the parents/guardian of any symptomatic student sent home.
- Any student demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 will be strongly encouraged to follow-up with their healthcare provider and/or get tested for COVID-19. If the student tests negative, the student will be allowed to return to school.

Otherwise, the student will not be allowed to return to school until ten (10) days have passed since their symptoms first appeared and three (3) days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

- A student who may have been exposed to COVID-19, but is asymptomatic may be asked to quarantine and/or get tested to determine whether they are COVID-19 positive. The specific circumstances involved will dictate the applicable quarantine time period.
- If a student tests positive for COVID-19, Mercy will:
 - Notify and work with the local health department within 24 hours to:
 - Determine any need for school closure.
 - Notify any staff members, students (and their parents/guardians) who may have come into contact with the student with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
 - Collect contact information for any close contacts of the affected individual from two days before she showed symptoms to the time when she was last present at school.
 - Due to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts) and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements, the identity of a COVID-19 positive student cannot be revealed. Even if a student or her family acknowledges and publicly discloses a positive test, school staff and officials may not participate in discussions or acknowledge a positive test.
- During this time of isolation, students should participate in online learning as they are able.



EMPLOYEE COVID-19 RELATED SYMPTOMS/DIAGNOSIS

In order to minimize transmission of COVID-19, Mercy has identified an isolated space available for staff displaying COVID-19 symptoms.

At this time, our protocol for COVID-19 related symptoms and diagnosis are as follows:

- All employees will be asked a set of daily screening questions to ensure that they are not showing symptoms of COVID-19 or have had recent possible exposure to COVID-19 before entering the premises.
- Symptomatic employees who may have come into contact with a person with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis will not be allowed to come to school.
- Any employee showing symptoms of COVID-19 or who has had recent possible exposure to COVID-19 will be sent home. Mercy administration will follow-up with any symptomatic employee sent home.
- Any employee who is demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 will be strongly encouraged to follow-up with their healthcare provider and/or get tested for COVID-19. If an employee tests negative, the employee will be allowed to return to work.

Otherwise, the employee will not be allowed to return to work until ten (10) days have passed since their symptoms first appeared and three (3) days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

- Employees who may have been exposed to COVID-19 but are asymptomatic may be asked to quarantine and/or get tested to determine whether they are COVID-19 positive. The specific circumstances involved will dictate the applicable quarantine time period.
- If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, Mercy will:
 - Notify and work with the local health department within 24 hours to:
 - Determine any need for school closure.
 - Notify any staff members, students (and their parents/guardians) who may have come into contact with the employee with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
 - Collect contact information for any close contacts of the affected individual from two days before he/she showed symptoms to the time when he/she was last present at school.
 - Due to HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements, the identity of a COVID-19 positive employee cannot be revealed.
- During this time of isolation, any quarantined teacher will instruct remotely as they are able.

Because COVID-19 is a novel disease, our knowledge and best practices are ever evolving. What is consistent is our priority to the health and safety of our students and staff, while committing to academic excellence for all students.



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mhsmi.org

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